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EARLY DAYS OF MELROSE

by

Robert H. Miller

My father and mother and I was as the oldest of the family came out from Scotland, leaving there in 1837. Coming to Canada they settled in a new part of the country by the name of Perth in the lower province. After eight years they came to Melrose. On the way they arrive in Toronto, which was then called "Muddy York", made to the fields of the people of Toronto. Here they took the boat that brought them to Trenton, then sailed "The Harrows."

Here all their belongings were put into a wagon, drawn by a yoke of oxen. They took the old trail and that led to Colborne, and as there was not room enough on the wagon, all that were able to walk had to do so. Their landing place at Melrose was at Robert Miller's, Lot 11, Con. 6. He was my father's eldest brother by the first marriage.

He and his wife and small family had been on their homestead for three years, coming to it in 1832, and with them my people lived until they got a house built for themselves on Lot 15, Con. 6, what is now called the "Miller Grove Farm."

The house was just the ordinary pioneer home, a log dwelling with its fireplace, two windows, one at each side of the door. When they moved into it, it was just out of the reach of the falling trees being surrounded on all sides by the forest, the nearest clearance being a small mile distance. Their dwelling was in the summer of 1838. My family consisted of four boys and three girls. The work of my mother in Scotland was that of weaver of flax cloth, and in this country was a weaver of the homespun.

For a few years the hard work of clearing the forest rested on the two eldest boys, Alex and James, Alex being 16 and James 14 years of age. They came from Scotland in the month of June, 1837, the late Thomas Miller was born, second youngest of the family.

Until the present time I have spent all my time on this homestead, and so close to it that it has a resemblance of being a "little world of my own", having lived now in the third house.

There are few in the neighbourhood of Melrose who have seen the departure of early pioneers of Melrose being laid in their last resting place; but with some it was a very plain burial. Such was the case of my father, who died Aug. 12 1845. The coffin was made of pine boards as plain as it could be made. On the day of the funeral the coffin was placed in a wood sleigh and drawn by a yoke of oxen to the cemetery at Melrose, this being the first burial in that cemetery. The funeral cortege, this being the first burial in that cemetery. The funeral cortege walked as it was the custom to do, summer or winter, as there were not any wheeled rigs on the place. (The settlers drew all their hay and grain from the field to the barn in wood sleighs with scows.)

Considering the time, there was a large attendance at this funeral some coming a long distance on foot, a few from the second line of Floe and Draimbrae. Of these from a long distance were Mrs. John Harvie and their son Thomas. They were from the Harvie Settlement at Orillia. Mrs. Harvie, on her way home met with an accident. The horse, on going over a piece of corduroy road, stumbled, throwing her off and breaking her arm.

Mrs Harvie and her husband, Mr. John Harvie, with seven sons and one daughter were amongst the first settlers along the Harris road, settling three miles west of the town. At the time of their settling there were few houses on the ground where the town of Orillia now stands, none of them being of the log framed style. What is most remarkable is that the seven sons and their wives, the daughter and her husband, and the old couple all lie in the cemetery at Orillia.

Mr. John Harvie was the first one known in those northern parts to have an overshot mill, it being of the old style of mills, the meal ground instead of rolled.

This old time funeral will appear to some of your readers as something old and in the past, but it must be remembered that of the thousands of Canadian soldiers, who went overseas and lost their lives on the battlefields of Vimmy, Ypres, Somme, and the last so much so this old time suffix. They were wrapped in a flag and put into the grave and filled in.

And it is for us to be thankful that they did not lose their lives in vain, for there was a great victory won at the time of the fall of Germany.

Along with the first settlers ground Mountaine, which took place in 1832; was a man and his wife, the young family by the name of Slack. He settled on a main lot, which was in after years the property of Mr. T. Cockrelline. The man was refined in his manners, and although not a doctor, had a good deal of knowledge in that line. His home was the old fashioned pioneer's house, a log dwelling with one apartment and fifty-fifty.

At the early settling of the township of Medonte, which is an Indian name, Coldwater was an Indian village. The first flour mill and schoolhouse in Coldwater was built at the expense of the Government for the Indians. The mill was built in the old way, with its great wooden water wheel ten feet in diameter. The weight scales were two platforms hung from the ends of a balanced beam.

Grain was weighed by placing metal weights on the opposite platform, the heaviest of weight being 56 lbs. This mill, which stood a good many years, did a great deal of grinding in the winter grinding night and day for six days of the week to await overcrowding the farmers coming from over the Kennedy and from the second of Flos, and along the Penetang Road, as far south as Ralston

While the strong mills were in use the farmers got their flour through grinding. They took their wheat to the mill and a toll was taken of six pounds per bushel. The farmer received the balance in flour, bran or shorts, each grist waiting to turn as it went into the mill.

Along with the first settlers on the Pasqueng Road in 1815 was one James Johnston, they settled on a back lot south of Craigburst on the Vaspre Township. He had the experience of the wild animals in the bush, there being foxes, bears, wolves, and wildcats. This was owing to the swamp that lay at the north. They had to shut in their sheep and pigs in pens for over night. The bear in its way kills only for present use. It would take him a long time to kill as many sheep as a dog would destroy in a night.

Mr. Johnston was a man who yet his hands to something more than farming. He was a weaver of homespun cloth for the neighbourhood of Creighurst, and made boots for the family from his own tanning of leather.

In after years, he took pride in talking of pioneer days. He told of starting early one morning long before daylight to take his oxen for shoeing to Coldwater Mill. The oxen were slow travellers over the road. It took him six or seven hours to get there. They were the only means the early settlers had to get their produce over the road, the horses being rare, so much so that a pioneer's family in seeing a horse for the first time remarked to the parents about the waste of horns.

The ox had his day for being useful for clearing the land and cultivating the soil among the stumps. A yoke of oxen was preferred in many ways to a team of horses. The good sleigh had a convenient place to put them in as wolves were so plentiful it was not safe to travel the roads without a weapon of some kind, and if the oxen were attacked by wolves, it was up to the man to get his axe and go for them with all his strength as Samson did with the jaw of an ass over the Philistines.

On a winter's morning, Mr. Johnston was on his way to Coldwater with a yoke of oxen. When he came opposite Mr. Glee's house he saw smoke from the flue and knew that there was a fire in the fireplace. He thought it was his chance to get himself warmed. Rapping at the door it was opened by Mr. Glee, who, with his usual manners, said to Mr. Johnston, "Will you please step out for a few minutes, my wife is dressing?" - this being the one roomed house of the pioneers.

The pioneers of the township were from England, Scotland, and Ireland, but their being from different countries did not stand in the way of being friendly, and showing goodwill for they were all as one in neighbourly kindness.

The pioneers were, on the whole, a healthy lot of people. It was well for them that they were, as it made them able to endure the the hardships of life, such as the excessive heat in summer owing to

the small clearances. They did not have our heavy winds blowing.

Over the forests there were four kinds of evergreens; pine, cedar, hemlock, and balsam. They had a healthy effect on the atmosphere.

In the early days all the buildings were of logs, with a few exceptions from the dwelling houses the outbuildings, the church and the Schoolhouse. Frequently the day school was taught in the church. It may be interesting to know something of the log churches, the Presbyterian church on what is now the cemetery south of Hillsdale, and the Methodist church on the cemetery grounds at Hobart.

They were seated with lumber in the rough state, laid down as wooden blocks. The Methodist's seats were made with backs on them for the older people. They were at the front and the old women with their pretty embroidered white caps and black silk bonnets were made welcome to these seats, for the younger people, for their liking, wished to be a little further back. The custom in these two churches was for the women to sit on one side of the church, and the men on the other. The Rev Mr. Pray, of the town of Hillsdale, in the early fifties made his journey on horseback to these churches and had carried in that receptacle, the saddle bags, his wife only conveyance that was to be had, on the saddle on the horse's back.

In the neighbourhood of the Methodist church there dwelt a Methodist family; and it was this family that the Methodist Minister ever made his stay over Saturday nights, when he would come on horse back to preach the following day in the log church. This was the custom for many years.

The sleeping arrangements for the ministers, with this family in their log home was of a very plain design. For a window it had but one very small pane of glass. The mother of this family was a woman of an ordinary Christian woman in her duties to grow into the higher Christian life. There was little room for the woman folk through the long winter. She might have a rag carpet on the floor, but while sitting on a stool beside the fire-place, or there was a musical sound of the good woman's spinning wheel going through the day, spinning yarn for the winter. Over the brooding there were a few weavers. Those weavers had learned their trade in the old land and could make some good pieces of cloth then they got the good coloured yarns.

One pattern in the weaving would be for women's dresses, and the other for men's clothings. They would set on their looms some time in the fall and keep to their room, coming to their meals, in the night, a time some of the families would have to wait too long for their cloth, for all was depending on this way for clothing.

It was the homespun and nothing else. The long intake would pass over them, as they do now and spring came in with all its grandeur and beauty, for there was an abundance of the cold and chilly winds that blow now in the spring, these being such a large part of the land in bush it was a great hindrance to the clearances. This is spring came in singing of birds, singing their cheery notes as is making everything beautiful

In clearing, may i state that these pioneers were happy and content not withstanding all the disadvantages they laboured under. The reason for this contentment might have been their great desire to own land of their own. This they could not have in their native land, and as each year passed by they had always a field added to their clearance. This was done by cutting the trees down in winter and cutting them up into logs and in the summertime with a yoke of oxen, putting the logs in to heaps and burning off.

The settlers of this line were much better off than the old settlers of the township, in that they got money for their farm produce, of which the earlier settlers could not get.

The settlers of this line were much better off than the old settlers of the township, in that they got money for their farm produce which the early settlers could not get. The earliest settler would sell their dressed pork at 4½ per hundred and had to take half of this in money and half in trade.

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Sykes still live on the homestead, where they have brought up quite a large family, all married and away from home. They have lived on their homestead for 57 years this March next. They have been living married life of sixty three years, and keep well Mr. Sykes stiff enjoys a smoke from his pipe. It appears to agree well with his last summer he was courting in the fields like a younger man, while Mrs. Sykes does her household duties without help.

The opening is t e forest fe mans long in the past. The lines has been cleared on either side for a good many years now. There are very few of the first settlers as the line now, a good many of them have death removed away, and some have not chose to take their places.

It was in the early fifties that the Northern Railway first came from Toronto to Allandale, and the years later it was extended to Barrie and some years after it came its way to Orillia. This was a swift passage read while for Hennipin. All the time it was in the hands of the Northern Company. This railway may appear to be a small thing, but many will remember the good it did to the surrounding townships for before it came in the sale of farm produce was next to nothing. A farmer would take his load of oats twenty miles and receive ten cents, or a load adding pe, wheat, and oat all cash at that. So that farmer expressed it, Penny, indeed it as e hard thing to get one's thumb on." A farmer living in the township of Ore sold a pair of steers cattle to a butcher, Mr Fred Wright at Penetang. They must have been a good pair, fe. then dressed they weighed 2000 lbs. and after driving thirty miles he realized $60. A grown beef animal went out of Medonte to the same butcher its owner being paid with twenty eight twenty five pieces of silver.

In the middle of the farfpe, a shoemaker, Peter Gilliand, took to storekeeping as the Penetang road, south of Hillsdale now as Montreal fare. This being rough with hills, the government had a survey taken, the same going thrmy h Hillsdale on, and this store had to be moved across to the new road.

Considering the time, this was a good and general stock for a considerable time it was the only store on the second of Flos, and a great part of redonta. As the cheap trade of the had not been brought into the country, one was a dollar a pound. It was good tea, and gladdened the hinds of the pas ie when they got it. As the young and old then ate gate good tea she feels as though she could live at ease with sympathy. This store too. In dasomed meal, butter and eggs for these people. The dressed pear would be about 2½ a hundred This meadows with his own hands and filled man the storehouse took the "casnic all the year through, the journey occupying five days. two days each way and one day and night stoping over in Toronto, and on it returned he brought his store good with him. Salt was high in price a barral of salt could be exchanged for a barrel of flour the reason who did the teaming for some years was Mr. Thomas and named James Hawke, who has been living for a long time in the clay flats of Emily. Until the early actions of the township was very small things, as he went to Toronto, the first Grocer not being built and till the years forty-four. The settlers, being fawn Scotland, England, and Ireland received let ers from their mother land, and sometimes from Canada. The Postmaster for Casaigarvis, was sarsled to the eighth line. as there in brought to Mr. Newbrough's house good old Mrs. Fair was sign in the letters went were to be sent he spoke to the parties concerned. When word arrived, they made an ox sled, hatches it was sunshine of snowstorm and went on foot to get the news from the old home.

As the travels over country roads, these is to be seen in a while a land mark of pioneer days. An old log dwelling house, with a fire place, is an outstanding building but as the years go by there are always "news of these to be seen."

It may interest young people to read an account of the raising of one of these buildings, a log barn that was raised on the Pine Grove Farm. in the summer of 1853

In the morning when the men were gathered together for the asisch eight of the men took their axes with them. It was the young men the men were nearly all the steamers of the log buildings in the neighbourhood though exactly a this road came to be like a trade to them. It might be stated here, that there was at a great twil in pioneer days, the cutting down the forests, with its giant tasks, and cutting them into logs, so the lumber cut saw was unknown in these days. A yoke of oxen drew the pine logs to the midway, where the men on the ground, with their long poles shoved them up onto the walls, until the seven sides of the building were up. While the corners two were chopping on the end of these logs fitting them to be laid in their place the men on the seams could be sitting down on logs, talking and resting to their hearts of content, until matches supply of tea was needed.

These were the proceedings of the raising all through until the walls were high enough to where the two long plates up for the roof to rest on; then, the raising was finished

Of the thirty men who were at the raising, just two of them are living at present, and they keep remarkably well for men of their age.

At the time of the raising it was called a double block, the two buildings being apart from each other. As added to during the year a threshing floor was laid in use during the long winter with the lads threshing out the grain with their flails, which were two sticks of hardwood, coupled together with leather thongs. This was about the only way of threshing out the grain until the thrashing machines came in. A few who had horses made use of them by driving them around in a circle on the floor to tread out the grain.

In the early days of Medonte there lived a man on Lot 25, along the Penetang Road, by the name of Duke Stamp. His machine was the first one known to come into Medonte. It was a very small one without a separator. Driven by four horses, walking single in a circle, having a big metal wheel. In feeding this machine, he took but one half of a sheaf at a time. In the month of March, 1849, he had his little cylinder set in the West Side of Reeve Miller's log barn threshing for the late Jas. Miller. He was here for two or three days, for at times all the grain and seed was to be threshed by the family and help. After this they came treed mile, some made by two horses and others made by one. The threshing parts for these were the same. The horse would walk in the narrow way and, away walking up a rising hill, but getting no further ahead. Farmers who had the single horse mode changed them every hour.

Sometime in the sixties threshing machines came in with separators. Driven with four teams of horses. Some of these machines were a great grievance to the farmers in their prolonged stays at the barns, by something ever going wrong with the separator. There was room improvement when the steamer came in, but they were far behind the machines of to-day, for they neither had blowers or self feeders. One would think that there is little room for improvement in threshers now, for they are everything a farmer might desire.

Medonte was greatly timbered with the pine, beech, and maple. Over the township in different parts were the cedar, balsam, and spruce. The pine, with its green top standing so much higher than the other trees of the woods was the king of the forest.

The pioneer, for his means a clearing had the felling of the trees and the timber cut up into logs, and the brush piled in the winter with an axe. In the summer a man driving a yoke of oxen and four men with him, went into what was called the logging bee. Where the oxen could be driven to the two ends, the four men hooked them up into big heaps, while they were putting the fire out of the way, the team were bringing up another log for them. This kept the work pretty steady. There was no chance for idleness when the men needed a smoke they put down on a log for a few minutes and smoked as their hearts content.

Where land was closely timbered with pine, after a field was logged up with stumps and log heaps together it was a very busy place to get through, hard to drive an ox yoke with the yoke on. At her bean times for the driver to take the yoke off and carry it himself while the oxen went out ringle. When a field was logged up the heaps were

fired. This was done in the evening, when a field of logs was burning in the night to use a fine sight, as the redwood their light on the surrounding woods. Such a fire in the present time would be a great deal of money gone, up in smoke. When the burn was done, there was a good coal left to use for cooking in the way of braising. The pioneer went over the field carefully, leaving several hot coals in one area and repeating till only ash was left. This was one of the many methods of the pioneers, the reason being the cultivation of the land among the stumps of the roots spread out. Narrower stumps remained in the ground two weeks to fifteen years before they rotted out. The nine chains had to be cleared, then the stumping machine came along and pulled them out as they do not rot.

The pioneer, when he had a field ready for sowing, which was done by hand, the greater number of the pioneers using just the one hand in sowing. Thank God a few who were in good practice with both were able to use both hands. While they were sowing their work was to be admired, the way they threw and scattered the seed right and left. Keeping time with their hands to their steps.

They carried their seed in front of them in an open sack. When a field was sown it was harrowed over to cover the seed. The harrow was one of the clearest own make, consisting of three pieces of hardwood and dogs iron harrow pins. Sometimes the pioneer had a harrow of three pegs of a capital A when the field was ploughed with their horses. There was work for the boys to get their hoes and go around each stump to cover the seed while they about the surface roots.

When the harvesting came on, all that were about the homestead had could use a sickle used it. Before the field to reap the grain. The good woman of the house also assisted if she saw need for help

It is the few who survive who had their young days with the pioneers what see the changes that have taken place. Through death there has been the passing away of many pioneers with now a small part of all families. The forest to a great extent is gone as well as the stumps in the fields. The binder goes over fields, where the reaping hook and cradle was used and the mower has taken the place of the scythe and other implements, the hoe

Some time has elapsed, a period of about twenty years, between the arrival of the settler and the building of the first gambrel. All in use was made for flooring and shingles was cut by hand. These was done over the sapling. First a long narrow pit was dug in the earth of a depth, according as laid the pieces of timber, preferably pine as it is so easily cut. Pine was the only timber used for flooring. Next a pine log into a square piece of timber, it was slashed and morticked. The man who knew how to use the broad axe, following the line like hewed the four sides to a smooth finish. Next it was placed over the pit and chalk lined on the upper and inner sides to the thickness of board required.

One man stood on the piece of timber, the other in the pit. They worked their saw up and down, ever carefull to follow the marked line. The saw made for it a purpose was like a rip saw. The handles were

attended at each end at right angles to the length of the saw. Some of this handwork may still be seen in the neighbourhood. To get material for flooring some pioneers took two blocks of pine five feet in length and split them into boards, dressing them off with the axe. They were pinned down to the under joist with wooden pins.

Some schools of the day had just such floors. For some time Mount St. Louis was without a school building. School was held at various homes of the parents, with two weeks as the time allotted to each home. This was quite an inconvenience to the lady of the house. The period for study was seven hours, and she was left to get through her work as best she could while teaching was always busy. Mrs. especially in winter was it an inconvenience.

There were no stoves, and the pupils were delighted in gathering closely around the fire-place to the annoyance of the good housewife.

The first two sawmills in the township of Medonte were built in Coldwater and on the 11th line; both. The one on the 11th was owned by Captain Wilson, one of the earliest settlers of the township. He came from Scotland in 1832 with his young family. While the boys were as yet quite small he established an all round lot on what is now the Wilson farm. At this time there were very few settlers in the township. Their clearings were small here and there in the tall forest. The township was thickly clustered with several kinds of trees. The majority being pine.

In these days the bush was a beautiful scene an ideal picnic ground. There was no little fallen timber and generally any undergrowth.

Captain Wilson had been on his place for some time before he built his sawmill. It was built on the stream a short distance from his residence, and was driven by water power. The old saw frame of this has become quite small. His three sons, William, Joseph, and George had grown up and were now young men. Some time after the mill was built, Joseph and George left home, William remained on the homestead to the end of his days, living to an honourable old age.

He had been Clerk and Treasurer of the township for quite a number of years. Recently it was sent in Rudy's correspondence to The Times of the death of George, who died in England at the age of 93. Joseph had predeceased him; they also have a sister, Mrs. Buchanan, living in Toronto. This is the last of the three boys, who were pioneers, residing into Medonte with their father in 1832.

When I saw an old log dwelling house with its fire-place, it sets me a thinking of the early days before stoves came in. These landmarks of pioneer days are getting to be scarce few in the country.

The cooking of meat was done at these fireplaces. Pieces of meat were placed in the big round iron pan with its long handle raised up into the mouth of a wooden jack. The pan was placed before the fire, as the meat was cooked with a reflection of heat.

The pot for the boiling of potatoes was hung over the fire from
e frame, and in the baking of bread it was placed in the metal oven
and covered over with a lid and set on hot coals, and reversed over
with hot coals. In this way the best of bread was made, as there
s an absence of the long waiting and hardening of brown crust and in the
aking of sweet cakes and puddings there was no dearth of things

In the neighbourhood of Mount St Louis there dwelt a retired
British soldier, one Thompson. He had been badly wounded in one of
the first wars in an engagement with the army. He was not a professional
tailor but was handy with the needle and cutting out cloth.

He went to the house that stood in need of him, and one there we
set or sewing machine in the settlements at this time, he was quite
o ew dare in some homes, sitting in the table playing the needle
over the homespun cloth. Some of the grander women would had fine
black suits of clother that they had brought with them from the old
land. At this time there were no machines. Thompson was ready and
he set to his task. The man of the house could go to the store and weight
the leather required and if he could not make them himself got someone
to make them for him. In the long ago days of the settlement there a
few retired British soldiers settled on the from lands by the government
intending to farm the rest of their days, and from among these the man
would get one who took in hand to make the boots to the best of his
knowledge.

This did not always remain their way, wheelmakers coming into the
settlement who had served their apprenticeship to the full time, and
they kept a stock of leather on hand. The process of tanning being
so much better than it to now made the leather more durable, making
very neat and strong boots that would put in the shade many of the
boots made now.

In the middle of the fifties harvesting at Groth was the same
as the middle fifties. We lived in the boot of Ruth of the Moss coming
into the field of the reapers at Belshom. The fields same into use
at this time. The amount of grain one could cradle in a day would vary
greatly. It was from 25 to 5 perches but very few accomplished the
latter. The writer had only one man who could e this. In the early
days of Flos there were not any large farms in the neighbourhood. At
this time Mr & Mrs. Dawsonport and a father of the late oldest in the
southern states. But in some way before the abolition of slavery they
se their freeff and some of them returned. One of t ese fone, Robinson
by name, who o rewarkably well with the farm with a etorly appearance.
I have been known of to in the vicinity of Flos to set down six
ong with o rrolls leaving it in the swath. He was known to carry r
eal of flour across o cumberation making in all 2lb lbs.

The first rumping machine in Endonto came on the old homestead
of the Russell farm at the late conversion to the beginning of the
s ventees. It was good for their own use. Few other farmers follow
ing in the same way. The greatest advance to pulling stumpy wor
d when young men bought stumping machines. To the best mind, with
he greatest reward in pulling and pulling joos from farr to farm
ey ever change in se retember 1 o fo osme

The steering mechanism was by the engine steerers, the other steering through the rear wheel gears. When the engine was in the front it was then the forward wheels down each side, the first being the mower and the reaper, the latter working on the other on a good binder row. The reaper has four revolving rake arms, two on the mower and the last-farm without binding. The first mower was on the Irish line on the outskirts of the Chanadian farm, about 1890.

In the South of James Burnfield and his brother Andrew, Madonte has lost two of its pioneers. They have both seen the remarkable old age, each being in the middle eighties and Madonte has its eighty second year. Andrew having always remained single. In the summer of 1835 there came into McKenzie their parents James Burnfield, his wife, and two boys, one of them being the late James Burnfield at the age of three years. Mr. Burnfield settled himself and his family on the west half of lot No. One, in Victoria, where he built a small clearing, living, some time on it, but finding no later there, he moved to the west hundred acres. Mr. & Mrs. Burnfield, like all other pioneers had their hardships, and like other pioneers before them, took with cheerfulness and contentment, always looking forward to better times. The time soon drew on when his family of boys was quite a help to him. James more than any of the others, after leaving he took, being strong and robust young man always take for his work, so when there was plenty to do.

When Mr. Burnfield had settled on his place sometimes he had a narrow escape from being killed with his gun. On reaching a moon outside he took down his gun to load it, the powder flask being a well seasoning one for a charge, a spring closing by wind which off the powder and in the emptying of the charge into the gun, the spring in some way failed to close, thus letting out more powder than the charge. When the gun was fired off it exploded, the barrel flying off to pieces some parts being found a long distance from the shooting place. Mr. Burnfield received such a blow from the exploaded gun, it knocked him to the ground. This as the last time he handled a gun.

Mr. Burnfield was a retired British soldier, his tall erect form and military step showed well that he had been a soldier. He remained this way pretty well all his life. He had a very pleasant experience of being lost in the woods. Having gone towards evening to look for his cows. It became wet while lay to the north after waiting in the woods for some time he failed to find them, and finally came to realize that he was lost in the woods and did not know which way to turn to find home. He then considered it was better for him to follow the banks of the river through to the Road, which led out to the Penetang road, he would be safe and be landed there

It was a long dreary walk in the night having to cross four concessions, and besides this the great angle of the concession and river added some miles extra. However he came out alright after his long tedious walk his landing place being near where the grist mill now stands.

The wild animals [illegible] were plentiful, [illegible] plentiful, [illegible] was in great demand as [illegible] were used for food and [illegible] were their home. In the early days [illegible] morning deer [illegible] were heard [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] over his loss in the woods, some of the neighbours [illegible] and blow their horns [illegible] their guns, but he never [illegible] of it.

In the month of March, 1865, Mr. John Durnfield died, his wife having predeceased him two years, and on Apr. 5, 1865, their son, the late James Durnfield married Miss Jane Walker, who still survives him.

It was a beautiful day for [illegible] so early in the season. All the [illegible] sunshine. The scene [illegible] very plentiful, [illegible] with horses, others with [illegible]. It was just an ordinary country wedding, everything being well [illegible] it was the occasion a happy one. When the writer sees the old vacant houses [illegible] off the road where the wedding was held, it sets him a thinking of man's time on earth, for of those who attended the wedding very few remain. The minister has long passed away with the rest, which reminds us of what we read in he 103rd Psalm.

Of the Durnfield family, there still remains Robert, of Mornington, Mrs. R. Cumming, of Varey, and Mrs. J. McGill of Moreley. Of the late James Durnfield's family, Donald Mc. Millan Miller and Mrs. Margaret of Over, and William and Robert Jamon the homestead.

In the early forties, there came from Scotland a man named John Robertson, to look for a home in the wilds of Nedouma. He chose himself a lot, then the south half of Section 5 in the 1st Concession, Park This man took the first plan of bringing two of his older sons with him, leaving the rest of the family behind to have a home prepared for them when they should come. Some time in the latter part of August in the year 1845 he rest of the family arrived. When they came to the landing place there stood the bush thick and the shanty a solid field of wheat ready for the sickle.

The older members of the family with sickle in hand, went to work to reap a roadway to get in for it must be understood that in those days people with a small clearance could ill afford to lose a sheaf to be trampled under foot.

The mother of this family was a true type of a pioneer woman. Coming from the Old Country with a good strong constitution, she was able to bear the hardships of pioneer life. Not many years after her settling she lost her husband through death, which left her with more care, but being a very Godly Christian woman, and being careful and [illegible] she was ever able to make both ends meet to the centre of the [illegible]. The youngest of the family was a boy eleven years of age at the time of her settling on the place. Being small and delicate in his youth the older members of the family referred to him as the "Laddie". But it was this same Laddie who grew up to be a pretty stout build of a man, Robert Robertson and he is now [illegible] six [illegible] over the Fourscore and [illegible] still and strong.

A short time previous to his death, the writer had a long talk with the late Michael Passey of his doings in Modesta in his younger days — It would be too lengthy for your paper to make mention of his life. I left Mr. Peter Clelland, a store keeper along the Penetang Coldwater Hillsdale Here he was engaged in taxpayer In the summer the town was hitched to the heavy wagons to take form produce which the store had taken in, to Toronto and on returning he would bring back a load of store goods the time covering five days. He made mention of settling on a bush lot just a short distance south of the post office at Mount St Louis

He spoke of the bush lot as being heavily timbered, there being a great deal of pine on it. As there was no sale for timber at any kind in the early clearing of the land, all had to be cut up into logs and burned off, and drawn into heaps with a yoke of oxen. He also made mention of being married in the year fifty-two, to the widow who is now left wedding, so at the time of his death they had been married for over sixty years. Dying on August 5th he lacked but a few days of completing his nine-y-two years. The widow left behind is entitled to the sympathy of the surrounding neighbourhood in her bereavement.

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

EARLY DAYS OF MEDONTE

by

Robert M. Miller

My father and mother and three of the oldest of the family came out from Scotland, leaving there in 1827. Coming to Canada they settled in a new part of the country by the name of Perth in the lower province. After eight years they came to Medonte. On the way they arrived in Toronto, which was then called "Muddy York", much to the dislike of the people of Toronto. Here they took the boat that brought them to Orillia, then called 'The Narrows."

Here all their belongings were put into a wagon, drawn by a yoke of oxen. They took the old Indian road that led to Coldwater, and as there was not room enough on the wagon, all that were able to walk had to do so. Their landing place at Medonte was at Robert Miller's, Lot 11, Con. 6. He was my father's oldest brother by the first marriage.

He and his wife and small family had been on their homestead for three years, coming to it in 1832, and with them my people lived until they got a house built for themselves on Lot 13, Con. 6, what is now called the "Pine Grove Farm."

The house was just the ordinary pioneer house, a log dwelling with its fireplace, two windows, one at each side of the door. When they moved into it, it was just out of the reach of the falling trees being surrounded on all sides by the forest, the nearest clearance being a half mile distant. Their settling was in the summer of 1835. The family consisted of four boys and three girls. The trade of my father in Scotland was that of weaver of fine cloth, and in this country was a weaver of the home spun.

For a few years the hard work of clearing the forest rested on the two oldest boys, Alex and James, Alex being 16 and James 14 years of age. They came from Scotland. In the month of June, 1837, the late Thomas Miller was born, second youngest of the family.

Until the present time I have spent all my time on this homestead, and so close to it that it has a resemblance of being a 'little world of my own', having lived now in the third house.

There are few in the neighbourhood of Medonte who have seen the departure of early pioneers of Medonte being laid in their last resting place. But with some it was a very plain burial. Such was the case of my father, who died Aug. 11, 1845. The coffin was made of pine boards, my father, who died Aug. 11, 1845. The coffin was made of pine boards, as plain as it could be made. On the day of the funeral the coffin was placed in a wood sleigh and drawn by a yoke of oxen to the cemetery at Hebart, this being the first burial in that cemetery. The funeral procession walked, as it was the custom to do, summer or winter, as there were not any wheeled rigs on the place. (The settlers drew all their hay and grain from the field to the barn in wood sleighs with oxen.)

Considering the time, there was a large attendance at this funeral, some coming a long distance on foot, a few from the second line of Flos and Craigmuret. Of those from a long distance were Mrs. John Harvie and their son Thomas. They were from the Harvie Settlement at Orillia. Mrs. Harvie, on her way home met with an accident. The horse, on going over a piece of corduroy road, stumbled, throwing her off and breaking her arm.

Mrs. Harvie and her husband, Mr. John Harvie, with seven sons and one daughter were amongst the first settlers along the Harris road, settling three miles west of the town. At the time of their settling there were few houses on the ground where the town of Orillia now stands, some of them being of the pioneer style. What is most remarkable is that the seven sons and their wives, the daughter and her husband, and the old couple all lie in the cemetery at Orillia.

Mr. John Harvie was the first one known in those northern parts to have an oatmeal mill, it being of the old style of mills, the meal ground instead of rolled.

This old time funeral will appear to some of your readers as something old and in the past, but it must be remembered that of the thousands of Canadian soldiers, who went overseas and lost their lives on the battlefields of France, that some of them did not get so much as this old time coffin, the body wrapped in a flag and put into the grave and filled in.

And it is for us to be thankful that they did not lose their lives in vain, for there was a great victory won at the time of the fall of Germany.

Along with the first settlers around Moonstone, which took place in 1832, was a man and his wife, the young family by the name of Slee. He settled on a bush lot, which was in after years the property of Mr. T. Goodfellow. The man was refined in his manners, and although not a doctor, had a good deal of knowledge in that line. His house was the ordinary pioneer's house, a log dwelling with one apartment and fire-place.

At the early settling of the township of Mesonte, which is an Indian name, Coldwater was an Indian village. The first flour mill and schoolhouse in Coldwater was built at the expense of the Government for the Indians. The Mill was built in the old way, with its great wooden water wheel ten feet in diameter. The weight scales were two platforms hung from the ends of a balanced beam.

Grain was weighed by placing metal weights on the opposite platform, the heaviest of weights being 56 lbs. This mill, which stood a good many years, did a great deal of grinding in the winter grinding night and day for six days of the week to avoid overcrowding the farmers coming from over the township and from the second of Flos, and along the Penetang Road, as far south as Deleton.

While the stone mills were in use the farmers got their flour through grinding. They took their wheat to the mill and a toll was taken of six pounds per bushel. The farmer received the balance in flour, bran or shorts, each grist waiting to turn as it went into the mill.

Along with the first settlers on the Penetang Road in 1815 was one James Johnston, they settled on a bush lot north of Craighurst on the Vespra Township. He had the experience of the wild animals in the bush, there being foxes, bears, wolves, and wildcats. This was owing to the swamp that lay at the north. They had to shut in their sheep and pigs in pens for over night. The bear in its way kills only for present use. It would take him a long time to kill as many sheep as a dog would destroy in a night.

Mr, Johnston was a man who put his hands to something more than farming. He was a weaver of homespun cloth for the neighbourhood of Craighurst, and made boots for the family from his own tanning of leather.

In after years, he took pride in talking of pioneer days. He told of starting early one morning long before daylight to take his oxen for grist to Coldwater Mill. The oxen were slow travellers over the road. It took him six or seven hours to get there. They were the only means the early settlers had to get their produce over the road, the horse being rare, so much so that a pioneer's family in seeing a horse for the first time remarked to the parents about the want of horns.

The ox had his day for being useful for clearing the land and cultivating the soil among the stumps. A yoke of oxen was preferred in many ways to a team of horses. The wood sleigh had a convenient place to put the axe, as wolves were so plentiful it was not safe to travel the roads without a weapon of some kind, and if the oxen were attacked by wolves, it was up to the man to get his axe and go for them with all his strength as Sampson did with the jaw of an ass over the Philistines.

On a winter's morning, Mr. Johnston was on his way to Coldwater with a yoke of oxen. When he came opposite Mr. Slee's house he saw smoke from the flue and knew that there was a fire in the fireplace. He thought it was his chance to get himself warmed. Stopping at the door, it was opened by Mr. Slee, who, with his usual manners, said to Mr. Johnston, "Will you please stay out for a few minutes, my wife is dressing?" - This being the one roomed house of the pioneer.

The pioneers of the township were from England, Scotland, and Ireland, but their being from different countries did not stand in the way of being friendly, and showing goodwill, for they were all as one in neighbourly kindness.

The pioneers were, on the whole, a healthy lot of people. It was well for them that they were, as it made them able to endure the the hardships of life, such as the excessive heat in summer owing to

the small clearances. They did not have our breezy winds blowing.

Over the forests there were four kinds of evergreens, pine, cedar, hemlock, and balsam. They had a healthy effect on the atmosphere.

In the early days all the buildings were of logs, with a few exceptions from the dwelling house the outbuildings, the church, and the schoolhouse. Frequently the day school was taught in the church. It may be interesting to know something of these log churches, the Presbyterian church on what is now the cemetery south of Hillsdale, and the Methodist church on the cemetery grounds at Hobart.

They were seated with lumber in the rough state, laid down as wooden blocks. The Methodists had few seats made with backs on them for the older people. They were at the front and the old women with their pretty embroidered white caps and black silk bonnets were made welcome to these seats, for the younger people, to their liking, wished to be a little further back. The outdoor in these two churches was for the women to sit on one side of the church, and the men on the other. The Rev. Dr. Gray, of the town of Orillia, in the early Fifties made his journey on horseback to these churches and had service in them occasionally. In the summer time the only conveyance that was to be had was the saddle on the horse's back.

In the neighbourhood of the Methodist church there dwelt a Methodist family, and it was this family that the Methodist Minister ever made his stay over Saturday nights, when he would come on horse back to preach the following day in the log church. This was the custom for many years.

The sleeping room for the minister, with this family in their log house was of a very plain design, for a window it had but one very small pane of glass. The mother of the family was more than an ordinary Christian woman in her desire to grow into the higher Christian life. There was little music for the women folk through the long winter. She might hear a boy playing on his jew's harp, while sitting on a stool beside the fire-place, or there was a musical sound of the good woman's spinning wheel going through the day, spinning yarn for the weaver. Over the township there were a few weavers. Those weavers had learned their trade in the old land and could make some good pieces of cloth when they got the good coloured yarn.

One pattern in the weaving would be for women's dresses, and the other for men's clothing. They would get on their looms some time in the fall and keep to that from morning to some hours in the night, so that none of the families would have to wait too long for their cloth, for all were depending on this way for clothing.

It was the homespun and nothing else. The long winters would pass over then, as they do now and spring came in with all its grandeur and beauty, for there was an abundance of the cold and chilly winds that blow now in the spring, there being such a large part of the land in bush it was a great windbreak to the clearances. With the spring came the singing of birds, singing their cheery notes of praise, making everything beautiful.

In closing, may I state that these pioneers were happy and content, notwithstanding all the disadvantages they laboured under. The reason for this contentment might have been their great desire to own land of their own. This they could not have in their native land, and as each year passed by they had always a field added to their clearance. This was done by cutting the trees down in winter and cutting them up into logs, and in the summertime with a yoke of oxen, putting the logs in to heaps and burning off.

The settlers of this line were much better off than the old settlers of the township, in that they got money for their farm produce, of which the earlier settlers could not get.

The settlers of this line were much better off than the old settlers of the township, in that they got money for their farm produce which the early settlers could not get. The earliest settler would sell their dressed pork at 4d per hundred and had to take half of this in money and half in trade.

Mr. & Mrs. Thos. Sykes still live on the homestead, where they have brought up quite a large family, all married and away from home. They have lived on their homestead for fifty three years last fall. They have had a long married life of sixty three years, and keep well. Mr. Sykes still enjoys a smoke from his pipe. It appears to agree well with him. Last summer he was working in the fields like a younger man, while Mrs. Sykes does her household duties without help.

The opening in the forest is now long in the past. The line has been cleared on either side for a good many years now. There are very few of the first settlers on the line now, a good many of them through death have passed away, and some have left others to take their places.

It was in the early fifties that the Northern Railway first came from Toronto to Allandale, and two years later it was extended to Barrie, and some years after it was its way to Orillia. This was a well conducted road with few mishaps. All the time it was in the hands of the Northern Company. This railway may appear to be a small thing, but many will remember how good it did to the surrounding townships, for before it came on the sale of farm produce was next to nothing. A farmer would take his load of oats twenty miles and receive ten cents, or a York shilling per bushel, and not all cash at that. As the Irishman expressed it, 'Money, indeed, it was a hard thing to get onto the thumb on.' A farmer living in the township of Oro sold a pair of beef cattle to a butcher, Mr. Fred Wright at Penetang, they must have been a good pair, for when dressed they weighed 2000 lbs., and after driving thirty miles, he realized $80. A green beef animal went out of Hedonte to the same butcher, the owner being paid with twenty eight twenty five pieces of silver.

In the middle of the forties, a Scotsman, Peter Clelland, took to storekeeping on the Penetang road, south of Hilledale (now as Shortreed's farm. This being rough with hills, the government had a survey taken, the same going through Hillsdale now, and this store had to be moved across to the new road.

Considering the time, this was a good general store. For a considerable time it was the only store on the second of Flos, and a great part of Medonte. As the cheap grade of tea had not been brought into the country, tea was a dollar a pound. It was good tea, and gladdened the minds of the people when they got it. As the woman said, When she gets good tea she feels as though she could live at peace with everybody." This store took in dressed pork, butter and eggs for store goods. The dressed pork would be about 23 a hundred. This produce with his own team and hired man the storekeeper took to Toronto all the year through, the journey occupying five days, two days each way, and a day and night staying over in Toronto, and on his return he brought his store goods with him. Salt was high in price; a barrel of salt could be exchanged for a barrel of flour. The person who did the teaming for some length of time was a young man named James Hawke, who has now been living for a long time on the clay flats of Eady. Mail for the early settlers of the township was a very small thing, as no newspapers were to be had from Toronto, the Globe not being published till the year forty-four. The settlers, being from Scotland, England, and Ireland, received letters from their native land, and an occasional newspaper. This mail when brought to Craighurst, was carried to the eighth line, to where Mr. Thos. Moon now lives, his father being postmaster and Clerk Treasurer of the township until his decease. Until its present name it was called the Hedonton Post Office. This postmaster, when he received letters, sent word as best he could to the parties concerned. When word arrived, they made no delay, whether it was sunshine or snowstorm and sent on foot to get the news from the old land.

As one travels over country roads, there is to be seen in a while a lone mark of pioneer days. An old log dwelling house, with its fire place, is an outstanding building, but as the years go by there are always fewer of these to be seen.

It may interest young people to read an account of the raising of one of these buildings, a log barn that was raised on the Pine Grove Farm, in the summer of 1853.

In the morning when the men were gathered together for the raising eight of the men took their axes with them. It was the young men that took up nearly all the corners of the log buildings in the neighbourhood. Through practice this had come to be like a trade to them. It might be stated here, that the axe was a great tool in pioneer days, in cutting down the forests, with its giant trees, and cutting them into logs, as the cross cut saw was unknown in those days. A yoke of oxen drew the pine logs to the skidway, where the men on the ground, with their long poles shoved them up onto the walls, until the required number went up. While the corner men were chopping on the ends of these logs fitting them to be laid in their places, the men on the ground could be sitting down on logs, talking and smoking to their hearts' content, until another supply of logs were needed.

These were the proceedings of the raising all through until the walls were high enough to shove the two long plates up for the roof to rest on, thus, the raising was finished.

Of the thirty men who were at the raising, just two of them are living at present, and they keep remarkably well for men of their age.

At the time of the raising it was called a double block, the two buildings being apart from each other, to admit a driving way and a threshing floor was well in use during the long winter with the lads threshing out the grain with their flails, which were two sticks of hardwood, coupled together with leather caps. This was about the only way of threshing out the grain until the threshing machines came in. A few who had horses made use of them by driving them around in a circle on the floor to tread out the grain.

In the early days of Medonte there lived a man on Lot 25, along the Penetang Road, by the name of Duke Stamp. His machine was the first one known to come into Medonte. It was a very small one, without a separator, driven by four horses, waling single in a circle, turning a big metal wheel. In feeding this machine, he took but one half of a sheaf at a time. In the month of March, 1849, he had his little cylinder set in the west now of George Miller's log barn threshing for the late Jas. Miller. He was here for two or three days, for at times all the grain and chaff had to go through the fanning mill. After this there came tread mills, some made for two horses and others made for one. The threshing parts for these were the same. The horse would walk in his narrow box all day, ever walking up a steep hill, but getting no farther ahead. Farmers who had the single horse mills changed them every hour.

Sometime in the sixties threshing machines came in with separators, driven with four teams of horses. Some of these machines were a great grievance to the farmers in their prolonged stays at the barns, by something ever going wrong with the separator. There was some improvement when the steamers came in, but they were far behind the machines of to-day, for they neither had blowers or self-feaders. One would think that there is little room for improvement in threshers now, for they are everything a farmer might desire.

Medonte was greatly timbered with the pine, beach, and maple. Over the township in different parts were the cedar, balsam, and spruce. The pine, with its green tone standing so much higher than the other trees of the woods, was king of the forest.

The pioneer, for his season's clearing, had the felling of the trees and the timber cut up into log e, which was done in the winter with the axe. In the summer a team driving a yoke of oxen and four men with him, went into what was called the logging field. While the men drew the logs to the two sides, the four men rolled them up into big heaps. While they were putting the log out of the way, the oxen were bringing up another log for them. This kept the work pretty steady. There was no chance for idleness, when the men needed a smoke they sat down on a log for a few minutes and smoked to their hearts content.

Where land was closely timbered with pine, after a field was logged up with stumps and log heaps together it was a very close place to go through, hard to drive an ox yoke with the yoke on. It has been known for the driver to take the yoke off and carry it himself while the oxen went out single. When a field was logged up the heaps were

fired. This was done in the evening. When a field of logs was burning in the night it was a fine sight, as they reflected their light on the surrounding woods. Such a fire at the present time would be a great deal of cheap going up in smoke. When the heaps were done burning, there was a good deal left to each hand in the way of brands. The pioneer went over the field again, drawing several heaps into one heap and repeating till only each was left. This was one of the many hardships of the pioneers, the other being the cultivation of the land among the stumps with their roots spread out. Hardwood stumps remained in the ground from twelve to fifteen years before they rotted out. The pine stumps had to remain till the stumping machine came along and pulled them out, as they do not rot.

The pioneer, when he had a field ready for sowing, which was done by hand, the greater number of the pioneers using just the one hand in sowing. There were a few who were in good practice who were able to use both hands. While they were sowing their work was to be admired, the way they threw and scattered the seed right and left, keeping time with their hands to their steps.

They carried their seed in front of them in an open sack. When a field was sown it was harrowed over to cover the seed. The harrow was one of the pioneers own make, consisting of three pieces of hardwood and a dozen iron harrow pins from the blacksmith. It was made in the shape of a capital A when the field was finished with their harrow, there was work for the boys to get their hoes and go around each stump and cover the seed which lay about the surface roots.

When the harvesting came on, all that were about the homestead that could use a sickle went out into the field to reap the grain. The good woman of the house also assisted if she saw need for help.

It is the few who survive who had their young days with the pioneers what see the changes that have taken place. Through death there has been the passing away of the pioneers, with some, a large part of their families. The forest to a great extent is gone as well as the stumps in the fields. The binder goes over fields, where the reaping hook and cradle was used, and the mower has taken the place of the scythe, and other implements, the hoe.

Some time has elapsed, a period of about twenty years, between the arrival of the settler and the building of the first sawmill. All timber needed for flooring and doors was cut by hand. This was done over the saw pit. First a long narrow pit was dug in the earth to some depth, across this was laid two pieces of timber, preferably pine as it was so easily cut. Pine was the only timber used for flooring. To cut a pine log into a square piece of timber, it was slashed and scorehacked. The man who knew how to use the broad axe, fellowing the marking line, hewed the four sides to a smooth finish. Next it was placed over the pit and chalk lined on the upper and lower sides to the thickness of board required.

One man stood on the piece of timber, the other in the pit. They worked their saw up and down, ever careful to follow the marked line. The saws made for this purpose were like a rip saw. The handles were

attached at each end at right angles to the length of the saw. Some of this handiwork may still be seen in the neighbourhood. To get material for flooring some pioneers took two blocks of pine five feet in length and split these into boards, dressing them off with the axe. They were pinned down to the under joist with wooden pins.

Some schools of the day had just such floors. For some time Mount St. Louis was without a school building. School was held at various homes of the parents, with two weeks as the time allotted to each home. This was quite an inconvenience to the lady of the house. The period for study was seven hours, and she was left to get through her work as best she could while teacher and pupils were busy. More especially in winter was it an inconvenience.

There were no stoves, and the pupils were delighted in gathering closely around the fire-place, to the annoyance of the good housewife.

The first two sawmills in the township of Medonte were built in Coldwater and on the 11th. line, Essy. The one on the 11th. was owned by Captain Wilson, one of the earliest settlers of the township. He came from Scotland in 1832 with his young family. While the boys were as yet quite small he settled on an all bush lot, which is now the Wilson farm. At this time there were very few settlers in the township. Their clearings were small, mere openings in the tall forest. The township was thickly timbered with several kinds of trees, the majority being pine.

In these days the bush was a beautiful scene, an ideal picnic ground. There was no little fallen timber and scarcely any undergrowth.

Captain Wilson had been on his place for some time before he built his sawmill. It was built on the stream a short distance from his residence and was driven by water power. The stream through time has become quite small. His three sons, William, Joseph, and George had grown up and were now young men. Some time after the mill was built, Joseph and George left home, William remained on the homestead to the end of his days, living to an honourable old age.

He had been Clerk and Treasurer of the township for quite a number of years. Recently it was seen in Wady's correspondence to The Times of the death of George, who died in England at the age of 93, Joseph had predeceased him, they also have a sister, Mrs. Buchanan, living in Toronto. This is the last of the three boys, who were pioneers, coming into Medonte with their father in 1832.

When I see an old log dwelling house with its fire-place, it sets me a thinking of the early days before stoves came in. These landmarks of pioneer days are getting to be very few in the country.

The cooking of meat was done in these fireplaces. Pieces of meat were placed in the big round iron pan, with its long handle raised up into the notch of a wooden jack. The pan was placed before the fire, as the meat was cooked with a reflection of heat.

The pot for the boiling of potatoes was hung over the fire from a crane, and in the baking of bread it was placed in the Metal oven and covered over with a lid and set on hot coals, and covered over with hot coals. In this way the best of bread was made, as there is an absence of the toughening and hardening of the crust, and in the baking of sweet cakes and pies there was a dearth of this.

In the neighbourhood of Mount St. Louis there dwelt a retired British soldier, on a pension. He had been badly wounded in one of his feet while in an engagement in the army. He was not a professional tailor, but was handy with the needle and cutting out cloth.

As went to the homes that stood in need of him, and as there was neither sewing machines in the settlements at this time, he was quite a few days in some homes, sitting on the table plying the needle over the homespun cloth. Some of the pioneers, however, had fine black suits of clothes that they had brought with them from the old land. At this time there were neither shoemakers nor ready made boots to be had. The man of the house went to the store and bought the leather required and if he could not make them himself got someone to make them for him. In the early days of the township there were a few retired British soldiers settled on the free lands by the government intending to farm the rest of their days, and from among them the man would get one who took in hand to make the boots to the best of his knowledge.

This did not always remain this way, shoemakers coming into the settlement who had served their apprenticeship to the full time, and they kept a stock of leather on hand. The process of tanning being so much better than it is now made the leather more durable, making very neat and strong boots that would put in the shade many of the boots made you.

In the middle of the fifties, harvesting of grain was the same as in Bible times. We read in the book of Ruth of the Boaz coming into the field of the reapers at Bethlehem. The cradle came into use at this time. The amount of grain one could cradle in a day would vary greatly. It was from 2½ to 5 acres, but very few accomplished the latter. The writer had only one man who could do that. In the early days of Pine there dwelt on the second line a Mr. Deavenport. At one time Mr. & Mrs. Deavonport and a brother of his were slaves in the southern states, but in some way before the abolition of slavery they got their freedom and came to Canada. One of their sons, Robinson by name, was a remarkably well built man with a stately appearance. It has been known of him in the township of Flos to cut down six acres with a cradle, leaving it in the swath. He was known to carry a barrel of flour across a concession, making in all 218 lbs.

The first stumping machine in Medonte came on the old homestead of the Russell farm, on the 10th concession in the beginning of the seventies. It was good for their own use, a few other farmers following in the same way. The greatest advance in pulling stumps was made when young men bought stumping machines of the best kind, with the greatest speed in pulling and getting the same free farm to farm, making a great change in the settlement in a few years.

The stumping machine was for the pine stumps, the other stumps through time rotted out. When the farmer got the land cleared, then the farming machinery came into use, the first being the mower and the reaper, the latter costing as much as a good timber road. The reaper had four revolving rakes which drew the sheaves off the platform without bindings. The first binder was on the Irish line on the homestead of the Shannahan farm, which cost about $150.

In the death of James Burnfield and his brother Andrew, Madonte has lost two of its pioneers. They have both seen an honourable old age, James being in his ninetieth year and Andrew in his eighty second year, Andrew having always remained single. In the summer of 1835 there came into Madonte their parents, James Burnfield, his wife, and two boys, one of them being the late James Burnfield at the age of three years. Mr. Burnfield settled himself and his family on the east half of Lot 14, Con. 6, Madonte. Here he made a small clearing, living some time on it, but finding no water there, he moved to the west hundred acres. Mr. & Mrs. Burnfield, like all other pioneers had their hardships, and like other pioneers bore them with cheerfulness and contentment, always looking forward to better times. The time soon drew on when his family of boys was quite a help to him, James being the principal one in the help in clearing the bush, he being strong and robust young man, always able for his work, of which there was plenty to do.

When Mr. Burnfield had settled on his place sometimes he had a narrow escape from being killed with his gun. On seeing a coon outside he took down his gun to load it, the powder flask being a call-measuring one for a charge, a spring closing behind shut off the powder and in the emptying of the charge into the gun, the spring in some way failed too close, thus letting out too much powder than the charge. When the gun was fired off it exploded, the barrel flying all to pieces, some parts being found a long distance from the shooting place. Mr. Burnfield received such a blow from the overloaded gun, it knocked him to the ground. This was the last time he handled a gun.

Mr. Burnfield was a retired British soldier, his tall erect form and military step showed well that he had been a soldier. He remained this way pretty well all his life. He had a very unpleasant experience of being lost in the woods, having gone towards evening to look for his cows in the dense woods which lay to the north. After walking in the woods for some time, he failed to find them, and finally came to realize that he was lost in the woods, and did not know which way to turn to find home. He then considered it was better for him to follow the banks of the river through to the road, which led out to the Penetang road, he would be safe when he landed there.

It was a long dreary walk in the night having to cross four concessions and besides this, the great angle of the concessions and river added some miles extra. However he came out alright after his long tedious walk, his landing place being near where the grist mill now stands.

The wild animals such as bears and wolves then being plentiful, he was in great danger of his life. But when once on the road, he saw where his home lay. It was well toward morning when he reached home, there being great uneasiness and excitement over his loss in the woods, some of the neighbours had gathered blowing their horns and firing off their guns, but he heard nothing of it.

In the month of March, 1864, Mr. James Burnfield died, his wife having predeceased him two years, and on Apr. 5, 1865, their son, the late James Burnfield married Miss Jane Walker, who still survives him.

It was a beautiful day for being so early in the season. All was like sunshine. The cattle were busy ploughing, some with horses, others with oxen. It was just an ordinary country wedding, everything being well provided to make the occasion a happy one. When the writer sees the old vacant house from off the road where the wedding was held, it sets him a thinking of man's time on earth, for of those who attended the wedding very few remain. The minister has long passed away with the rest, which reminds us of what we read in the 103rd Psalm.

Of the Burnfield family, there still remains Robert, of Moonstone; Mrs. R. Cumming, of Vasey, and Mrs. J. McGill of Waverley. Of the late James Burnfield's family remains Mrs. Wilson Miller and Miss Margaret of Orr, and William and Robert J. on the homestead.

In the early forties, there came from Scotland a man named John Robertson, to look for a home in the wilds of Madonte. He chose himself a lot, then the solid bush, now known as the "Robertson Farm". This man took the wiser plan of bringing two of his older sons with him, leaving the rest of the family behind, to have a home prepared for them when they should arrive. Some time in the latter part of August in the year 1845 the rest of the family arrived. When they came to the landing place, there stood hewnix them and the shanty a solid field of wheat ready for the sickle.

The older members of the family, with sickle in hand, went to work to reap a roadway to get in, for it must be understood that in those days, people with a small clearance could ill afford to lose a sheaf to be trampled under foot.

The mother of this family was true type of a pioneer woman. Coming from the Old Country with a good strong constitution, she was able to bear the hardships of pioneer life. Not many years after her settling she lost her husband through death, which left her with more care, but being a very Godly Christian woman, and being careful and thrifty, she was ever able to make both ends meet to the wants of the family. The youngest of the family was a boy eleven years of age at the time of her settling on the place. Being small and delicate in his youth the older members of the family referred to him as the "wee laddie", but it was this wee laddie" who grew up to be a pretty stout build of a man, Robert Robertson, and he has now lived six years over the fourscore, and is still well and strong.

A short time previous to his death, the writer had a long talk with the late Michael Massey of his doings in Medonte, in his younger days, which would be too lengthy for your paper. He made mention of hiring himself with Mr. Peter Clelland, a store keeper along the Penetang Road, near Hillsdale. Here he was engaged as teamster. In the summer time the team was hitched to the heavy wagon, to take farm produce, which the store had taken in, to Toronto, and on returning he would bring back a load of store goods, the time covering five days. He made mention of settling on a bush lot just a short distance south of the post office at Mount St. Louis.

He spoke of the bush lot as being heavily timbered, there being a great deal of pine on it. As there was no sale for timber of any kind in the early clearing of the land, all had to be cut up into logs and burned off, and drawn into heaps with a yoke of oxen. He also made mention of being married in the year fifty-two, to the widow who is now left behind, so at the time of his death they had been married for over sixty years. Dying on August 5th., he lacked but a few days of completing his ninety-two years. The widow left behind is entitled to the sympathy of the surrounding neighbourhood in her bereavement.

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EARLY DAYS OF MEDONTE

by

Robert M. Miller

My father and mother and three of the oldest of the family came out from Scotland, leaving there in 1827. Coming to Canada they settled in a new part of the country by the name of Perth in the Lower province. After eight years they came to Medonte. On the way they arrived in Toronto, which was then called "Muddy York", much to the dislike of the people of Toronto. Here they took the boat that brought them to Orillia, then called "The Narrows."

Here all their belongings were put into a wagon, drawn by a yoke of oxen. They took the old Indian road that led to Coldwater, and as there was not room enough on the wagon, all that were able to walk had to do so. Their landing place at Medonte was at Robert Miller's, Lot 11, Con. 6. He was my father's oldest brother by the first marriage.

He and his wife and small family had been on their homestead for three years, coming to it in 1832, and with them my people lived until they got a house built for themselves on Lot 13, Con. 6, what is now called the "Pine Grove Farm."

The house was just the ordinary pioneer house, a log dwelling with its fireplace, two windows, one at each side of the door. When they moved into it, it was just out of the reach of the falling trees being surrounded on all sides by the forest, the nearest clearance being a half mile distant. Their settling was in the summer of 1835. The family consisted of four boys and three girls. The trade of my father in Scotland was that of weaver of fine cloth, and in this country was a weaver of the homespun.

For a few years the hard work of clearing the forest rested on the two oldest boys, Alex and James, Alex being 16 and James 14 years of age. They came from Scotland. In the month of June, 1837, the late Thomas Miller was born, second youngest of the family.

Until the present time I have spent all my time on this homestead, and so close to it that it has a resemblance of being a "little world of my own", having lived now in the third house.

There are few in the neighbourhood of Medonte who have seen the departure of early pioneers of Medonte being laid in their last resting place. But with some it was a very plain burial. Such was the case of my father, who died Aug. 11, 1845. The coffin was made of pine boards, as plain as it could be made. On the day of the funeral the coffin was placed in a wood sleigh and drawn by a yoke of oxen to the cemetery at Hobart, this being the first burial in that cemetery. The funeral procession walked, as it was the custom to do, summer or winter, as there were not any wheeled rigs on the place. (The settlers drew all their hay and grain from the field to the barn in wood sleighs with oxen.)

Considering the time, there was a large attendance at this funeral, some coming a long distance on foot, a few from the second line of Flos and Craighurst. Of those from a long distance were Mrs. John Harvie and their son Thomas. They were from the Harvie Settlement at Orillia. Mrs. Harvie, on her way home met with an accident. The horse, on going over a piece of corduroy road, stumbled, throwing her off and breaking her arm.

Mrs. Harvie and her husband, Mr. John Harvie, with seven sons and one daughter were amongst the first settlers along the Barrie road, settling three miles west of the town. At the time of their settling there were few houses on the ground where the town of Orillia now stands, some of them being of the pioneer style. What is most remarkable is that the seven sons and their wives, the daughter and her husband, and the old couple all lie in the cemetery at Orillia.

Mr. John Harvie was the first one known in those northern parts to have an oatmeal mill, it being of the old style of mills, the meal ground instead of rolled.

This old time funeral will appear to some of your readers as something old and in the past, but it must be remembered that of the thousands of Canadian soldiers, who went overseas and lost their lives on the battlefields of France, that some of them did not get so much as this old pine coffin, the body wrapped in a flag and put into the grave and filled in.

And it is for us to be thankful that they did not lose their lives in vain, for there was a great victory won at the time of the fall of Germany.

Along with the first settlers around Moonstone, which took place in 1832, was a man and his wife, the young family by the name of Sloe. He settled on a bush lot, which was in after years the property of Mr. T. Goodfellow. The man was refined in his manners, and although not a doctor, had a good deal of knowledge in that line. His house was the ordinary pioneer's house, a log dwelling with one apartment and fire-place.

At the early settling of the township of Medonte, which is an Indian name, Coldwater was an Indian village. The first flour mill and schoolhouse in Coldwater was built at the expense of the Government for the Indians. The Mill was built in the old way, with its great wooden water wheel ten feet in diameter. The weight scales were two platforms hung from the ends of a balanced beam.

Grain was weighed by placing metal weights on the opposite platform, the heaviest of weights being 56 lbs. This mill, which stood a good many years, did a great deal of grinding in the winter grinding night and day for six days of the week to avoid overcrowding the farmers coming from over the township and from the second of Flos, and along the Penetang Road, as far south as Delston.

While the stone mills were in use the farmers got their flour through gristing. They took their wheat to the mill and a toll was take of six pounds per bushel. The farmer received the balance in flour, bran or shorts, each grist waiting to turn as it went into the mill.

Along with the first settlers on the Penetang Road in 1815 was one James Johnston, they settled on a bush lot north of Craighurst on the Vespra Township. He had the experience of the wild animals in the bush, there being foxes, bears, wolves, and wildcats. This was owing to the swamp that lay at the north. They had to shut in their sheep and pigs in pens for over night. The bear in its way kills only for present use. It would take him a long time to kill as many sheep as a dog would destroy in a night.

Mr. Johnston was a man who put his hands to something more than farming. He was a weaver of homespun cloth for the neighbourhood of Craighust, and made boots for the family from his own tanning of leather.

In after years, he took pride in talking of pioneer days. He told of starting early one morning long before daylight to take his oxen for grist to Coldwater Mill. The oxen were slow travellers over the road. It took him six or seven hours to get there. They were the only means the early settlers had to get their produce over the road, the horse being rare, so much so that a pioneer's family in seeing a horse for the first time remarked to the parents about the want of horns.

The ox had his day for being useful for clearing the land and cultivating the soil among the stumps. A yoke of oxen was preferred in many ways to a team of horses. The wood sleigh had a convenient place to put the axe, as wolves were so plentiful it was not safe to travel the roads without a weapon of some kind, and if the oxen were attacked by wolves, it was up to the man to get his axe and go for them with all his strength as Sampson did with the jaw of an ass over the Philistines.

On a winter's morning, Mr. Johnston was on his way to Coldwater with a yoke of oxen. When he came opposite Mr. Slee's house he saw smoke from the flue and knew that there was a fire in the fireplace. He thought it was his chance to get himself warmed. Rapping at the door, it was opened by Mr. Slee, who, with his usual manners, said to Mr. Johnston, "Will you please stay out for a few minutes, my wife is dressing?" - This being the one roomed house of the pioneer.

The pioneers of the township were from England, Scotland, and Ireland, but their being from different countries did not stand in the way of being friendly, and showing goodwill, for they were all as one in neighbourly kindness.

The pioneers were, on the whole, a healthy lot of people. It was well for them that they were, as it made them able to endure the the hardships of life, such as the excessive heat in summer owing to

the small clearances. They did not have our breezy winds blowing.

Over the forests there were four kinds of evergreens; pine, cedar, hemlock, and balsam. They had a healthy effect on the atmosphere.

In the early days all the buildings were of logs, with a few exceptions from the dwelling house the outbuildings, the church, and the schoolhouse. Frequently the day school was taught in the church. It may be interesting to know something of these log churches, the Presbyterian church on what is now the cemetery south of Hillsdale, and the Methodist church on the cemetery grounds at Hobart.

They were seated with lumber in the rough state, laid down as wooden blocks. The Methodists had a few seats made with backs on them for the older people. They were at the front and the old woman with their pretty embroidered white caps and black silk bonnets were made welcome to those seats, for the younger people, to their liking, wished to be a little further back. The custom in these two churches was for the women to sit on one side of the church, and the men on the other. The Rev. Dr. Gray, of the town of Orillia, in the early fifties made his journey on horseback to these churches and had service in them occasionally. In the summer time the only conveyance that was to be had was the saddle on the horse's back.

In the neighbourhood of the Methodist church there dwelt a Methodist family, and it was this family that the Methodist minister ever made his stay over Saturday nights, when he would come on horse back to preach the following day in the log church. This was the custom for many years.

The sleeping room for the minister, with this family in their log house was of a very plain design. For a window it had but one very small pane of glass. The mother of the family was more than an ordinary Christian woman in her desire to grow into the higher Christian life. There was little music for the women folk through the long winter. She might hear a boy playing on his jew's harp, while sitting on a stool beside the fire-place, or there was a musical sound of the good woman's spinning wheel going through the day, spinning yarn for the weaver. Over the township there were a few weavers. Those weavers had learned their trade in the old land and could make some good pieces of cloth when they got the good coloured yarn.

One pattern in the weaving would be for women's dresses, and the other for men's clothing. They would get on their looms some time in the fall and keep to them from morning to some hours in the night, so that none of the families would have to wait too long for their cloth, for all were depending on this way for clothing.

It was the homespun and nothing else. The long winters would pass over them, as they do now and spring came in with all its grandeur and beauty, for there was an abundance of the cold and chilly winds that blow now in the spring, there being such a large part of the land in bush it was a great windbreak to the clearances. With the spring came the singing of birds, singing their cheery notes of praise, making everything beautiful.

In closing, may I state that these pioneers were happy and content, not withstanding all the disadvantages they laboured under. The reason for this contentment might have been their great desire to own land of their own. This they could not have in their native land, and as each year passed by they had always a field added to their clearance. This was done by cutting the trees down in winter and cutting them up into logs, and in the summertime with a yoke of oxen, putting the logs in to heaps and burning off.

The settlers of this line were much better off than the old settlers of the township, in that they got money for their farm produce, of which the earlier settlers could not get.

The settlers of this line were much better off than the old settlers of the township, in that they got money for their farm produce which the early settlers could not get. The earliest settler would sell their dressed pork at $3 per hundred and had to take half of this in money and half in trade.

Mr. & Mrs. Thos. Sykes still live on the homestead, where they have brought up quite a large family, all married and away from home. They have lived on their homestead for fifty three years last fall. They have had a long married life of sixty three years, and keep well. Mr. Sykes still enjoys a smoke from his pipe. It appears to agree well with him. Last summer he was working in the fields like a younger man, while Mrs. Sykes does her household duties without help.

The opening in the forest is now long in the past. The line has been cleared on either side for a good many years now. There are very few of the first settlers on the line now, a good many of them through death have passed away, and some have left others to take their places.

It was in the early fifties that the Northern Railway first came from Toronto to Allandale, and two years later it was extended to Barrie, and some years after it made its way to Orillia. This was a well conducted road with few mishaps. All the time it was in the hands of the Northern Company. This railway may appear to be a small thing, but many will remember the good it did to the surrounding townships, for before it came in the sale of farm produce was next to nothing. A farmer would take his load of oats twenty miles and receive ten cents, or a York shilling per bushel, and not all cash at that. As the Irishman expressed it, "Money, indeed, it was a hard thing to get one's thumb on." A farmer living in the township of Oro sold a pair of beef cattle to a butcher, Mr. Fred Wright at Penetang. They must have been a good pair, for when dressed they weighed 2000 lbs., and after driving thirty miles, he realized $40. A grown beef animal went out of Medonte to the same butcher, its owner being paid with twenty eight twenty five pieces of silver.

In the middle of the forties, a Scotsman, Peter Clelland, took to storekeeping on the Penetang road, south of Hillsdale (now as Shortreed's farm. This being rough with hills, the government had a survey taken, the same going through Hillsdale now, and this store had to be moved across to the new road.

Considering the time, this was a good general store. For a considerable time it was the only store on the second of Flos, and a great part of Medonte. As the cheap grade of tea had not been brought into thecountry, tea was a dollar a pound. It was good tea, and gladdened the minds of the people when they got it. As the woman said, 'When she gets good tea she feels as though she could live at peace with everybody.' This store took in dressed pork, butter and eggs for store goods. The dressed pork would be about $3 a hundred. This produce with his own team and hired man the storekeeper took to Toronto all the year through, the journey occupying five days, two days each way, and a day and night staying over in Toronto, and on his return he brought his store goods with him. Salt was high in price; a barrel of salt could be exchanged for a barrel of flour. The person who did the teaming for some length of time was a young man named James Hawke, who has now been living for a long time on the clay flats of Eady. Mail for the early settlers of the township was very small thing, as no newspapers were to be had from Toronto, the Globe not being published till the year forty-four. The settlers, being from Scotland, England, and Ireland, received letters from their native land, and an occasional newspaper. This mail when brought to Creighurst, was carried to the eighth line, to where Mr. Thos. Moon now lives, his father being postmaster and Clark Treasurer of the township until his decease. Until its present name it was called the Medonte Post Office. This postmaster, when he received letters, sent word as best he could to the parties concerned. When word arrived, they made no delay, whether it was sunshine or snowstorm and went on foot to get the news from the old land.

As one travels over country roads, there is to be seen in a while a land mark of pioneer days. An old log dwelling house, with its fire place, is an outstanding building, but as the years go by there are always fewer of these to be seen.

It may interest young people to read an account of the raising of one of these buildings, a log barn that was raised on the Pine Grove Farm, in the summer of 1853.

In the morning when the men were gathered together for the raising eight of the men took their axes with them. It was the young men that took up nearly all the corners of the log buildings in the neighbourhood. Through practice this had come to be like a trade to them. It might be stated here, that the axe was a great tool in pioneer days, in cutting down the forests, with its giant trees, and cutting them into logs, as the cross cut saw was unknown in those days. A yoke of oxen drew the pine logs to the skidway, where the men on the ground, with their long poles shoved them up onto the walls, until the required number went up. While the corner men were chopping on the end of these logs fitting them to be laid in their place, the men on the ground could be sitting down on logs, talking and smoking to their hearts' content, until another supply of logs were needed.

These were the proceedings of the raising all through until the walls were high enough to shove the two long plates up for the roof to rest on, thus, the raising was finished.

Of the thirty men who were at the raising, just two of them are living at present, and they keep remarkably well for men of their age.

At the time of the raising it was called a double block, the two buildings being apart from each other, to admit a driving way and a threshing floor was well in use during the long winter with the lads threshing out the grain with their flails, which were two sticks of hardwood, coupled together with leather caps. This was about the only way of threshing out the grain until the threshing machines came in. A few who had horses made use of them by driving them around in a circle on the floor to tread out the grain.

In the early days of Medonte there lived a man on Lot 85, along the Penetang Road, by the name of Duke Stamp. His machine was the first one known to come into Medonte. It was a very small one, without a separator, driven by four horses, weling single in a circle, turning a big metal wheel. In feeding this machine, he took but one half of a sheaf at a time. In the month of March, 1849, he had his little cylinder set in the west now of George Miller's log barn threshing for the late Jas. Miller. He was here for two or three days, for at times all the grain and chaff had to go through the fanning mill. After this there came tread mills, some made for two horses and others made for one. The threshing parts for these were the same. The horse would walk in his narrow box all day, ever walking up a steep hill, but getting no farther ahead. Farmers who had the single horse ones changed them every hour.

Sometime in the sixties threshing machines came in with separators, driven with four teams of horses. Some of these machines were a great grievance to the farmers in their prolonged stays at the barns, by something ever going wrong with the separator. There was some improvement when the steamers came in, but they were far behind the machines of to-day, for they neither had blowers or self-feeders. One would think that there is little room for improvement in threshers now, for they are everything a farmer might desire.

Medonte was greatly timbered with the pine, beech, and maple. Over the township in different parts were the cedar, balsam, and spruce. The pine, with its green tops standing so much higher than the other trees of the woods, was "king of the forest".

The pioneer, for his season's clearing, had the falling of the trees and the timber cut up into logs, which was done in the winter with the axe. In the summer a man driving a yoke of oxen and four men with him, went into what was called the logging field. While the oxen drew the logs to the two skids, the four men rolled them up into big heaps. While they were putting the log out of the way, the oxen were bringing up another log for them. This kept the work pretty steady. There was no chance for idleness; when the men needed a smoke they sat down on a log for a few minutes and smoked to their hearts content.

Where land was closely timbered with pine, after a field was logged up with stumps and log heaps together it was a very close place to go through, hard to drive an ox yoke with the yoke on. It has been known for the driver to take the yoke off and carry it himself while the oxen went out single. When a field was logged up the heaps were

fired. This was done in the evening. When a field of logs was burning in the night it was a fine sight, as they reflected their light on the surrounding woods. Such a fire at the present time would be a great deal of money going up in smoke. When the heaps were done burning, there was a good deal left to each heap in the way of brands. The pioneer went over the field again, drawing several heaps into one heap and repeating till only ashes left. This was one of the many hardships of the pioneers, the other being the cultivation of the land among the stumps with their roots spread out. Hardwood stumps remained in the ground from twelve to fifteen years before they rotted out. The pine stumps had to remain till the stumping machine came along and pulled them out, as they do not rot.

The pioneer, when he had a field ready for sowing, which was done by hand, the greater number of the pioneers using just the one hand in sowing. There were a few who were in good practice who were able to use both hands. While they were sowing their work was to be admired, the way they threw and scattered the seed right and left, keeping time with their hands to their steps.

They carried their seed in front of them in an open sack. When a field was sown it was harrowed over to cover the seed. The harrow was one of the pioneers own make, consisting of three pieces of hardwood and a dozen iron harrow pins from the blacksmith. It was made in the shape of a capital A when the field was finished with their harrow; there was work for the boys to get their hoes and go around each stump and cover the seed which lay about the surface roots.

When the harvesting came on, all that were about the homestead that could use a sickle went out into the field to reap the grain. The good woman of the house also assisted if she saw need for help.

It is the few who survive who had their young days with the pioneers what see the changes that have taken place. Through death there has been the passing away of the pioneers, with some, a large part of their families. The forest to a great extent is gone as well as the stumps in the fields. The binder goes over fields, where the reaping hook and cradle was used, and the mower has taken the place of the scythe, and other implements, the hoe.

Some time has elapsed, a period of about twenty years, between the arrival of the settler and the building of the first sawmill. All lumber needed for flooring and doors was cut by hand. This was done done over the saw pit. First a long narrow pit was dug in the earth to some depth, across this was laid two pieces of timber, preferably pine, as it was so easily cut. Pine was the only timber used for flooring. To cut a pine log into a square piece of timber, it was slashed and scorehacked. The man who knew how to use the broad axe, following the marking line, hewed the four sides to a smooth finish. Next it was placed over the pit and chalk lined on the upper end lower sides to the thickness of board required.

One man stood on the piece of timber, the other in the pit. They worked their saw up and down, ever careful to follow the marked line. The saws made for this purpose were like a lip saw. The handles were

attached at each end at right angles to the length of the saw. Some of this handiwork may still be seen in the neighbourhood. To get material for flooring some pioneers took two blocks of pine five feet in length and split these into boards, dressing them off with the axe. They were pinned down to the under joist with wooden pins.

Some schools of the day had just such floors. For some time Mount St. Louis was without a school building. School was held at various homes of the parents, with two weeks as the time alloted to each home. This was quite an inconvenience to the lady of the house. The period for study was seven hours, and she was left to get through her work as best she could while teacher and pupils were busy. More especially in winter was it an inconvenience.

There were no stoves, and the pupils were delighted in gathering closely around the fire-place, to the annoyance of the good housewife.

The first two sawmills in the township of Medonte were built in Coldwater and on the 11th. line, Eady. The one on the 11th. was owned by Captain Wilson, one of the earliest settlers of the township. He came from Scotland in 1832 with his young family. While the boys were as yet quite small he settled on an all bush lot, which is now the Wilson farm. At this time there were very few settlers in the township. Their clearings were small, mere openings in the tall forest. The township was thickly timbered with several kinds of trees, the majority being pine.

In these days the bush was a beautiful scene, an ideal picnic ground. There was so little fallen timber and scarcely any undergrowth.

Captain Wilson had been on his place for some time before he built his sawmill. It was built on the stream a short distance from his residence and was driven by water power. The stream through time has become quite small. His three sons, William, Joseph, and George had grown up and were now young men. Some time after the mill was built, Joseph and George left home, William remained on the homestead to the end of his days, living to an honourable old age.

He had been Clerk and Treasurer of the township for quite a number of years. Recently it was seen in Eady's correspondence to The Times of the death of George, who died in England at the age of 93, Joseph had predeceased him, they also have a sister, Mrs. Buchanan, living in Toronto. This is the last of the three boys, who were pioneers, coming into Medonte with their father in 1832.

When I see an old log dwelling house with its fire-place, it sets me a thinking of the early days before stoves came in. These landmarks of pioneer days are getting to be very few in the country.

The cooking of meat was done on these fireplaces. Pieces of meat were placed in the big round iron pan, with its long handle raised up into the notch of a wooden jack. The pan was placed before the fire, so the meat was cooked with a reflection of heat.

The pot for the boiling of potatoes was hung over the fire from a crane, and in the baking of bread it was placed in the metal oven and covered over with a lid and set on hot coals, and covered over with hot coals. In this way the best of bread was made, as there is an absence of the toughening and hardening of the crust, and in the baking of sweet cakes and pies there was a dearth of this.

In the neighbourhood of Mount St. Louis there dwelt a retired British soldier, on a pension. He had been badly wounded in one of his feet while in an engagement in the army. He was not a professional tailor, but was handy with the needle and cutting out cloth.

He went to the homes that stood in need of him, and as there was neither sewing machines in the settlements at this time, he was quite a few days in some homes, sitting on the table plying the needle over the homespun cloth. Some of the pioneers, however, had fine black suits of clothes that they had brought with them from the old land. At this time there were neither shoemakers nor ready made boots to be had. The man of the house went to the store and bought the leather required and if he could not make them himself got someone to make them for him. In the early days of the township there were a few retired British soldiers settled on the free lands by the government intending to farm the rest of their days, and from among these the man would get one who took in hand to make the boots to the best of his knowledge.

This did not always remain this way, shoemakers coming into the settlement who had served their apprenticeship to the full time, and they kept a stock of leather on hand. The process of tanning being so much better than it is now made the leather more durable, making very neat and strong boots that would put in the shape many of the boots made you.

In the middle of the fifties, harvesting of grain was the same as in Bible times. We read in the book of Ruth of the Boaz coming into the field of the reapers at Bethlehem. The cradle came into use at this time. The amount of grain one could cradle in a day would vary greatly. It was from 2½ to 5 acres, but very few accomplished the latter. The writer had only one man who could do that. In the early days of Flos there dwelt on the second line a Mr. Deavonport. At one time Mr. & Mrs. Deavonport and a brother of his were slaves in the southern states, but in some way before the abolition of slavary they got their freedom and came to Canada. One of their sons, Robinson by name, was a remarkably well built man with a stately appearance. It has been known of him in the township of Flos to cut down six acres with a cradle, leaving it in the swath. He was known to carry a barrel of flour across a concession, making in all 218 lbs.

The first stumping machine in Medonte came on the old homestead of the Russell farm, on the 10th. concession in the beginning of the seventies. It was good for their own use, a few other farmers following in the same way. The greatest advance in pulling stumps was made when young men bought stumping machines of the best kind, with the greatest speed in pulling and getting jobs done from farm to farm, making a great change in the settlement in a few years.

The stumping machine was for the pine stumps, the other stumps through time rotted out. When the farmer got the land cleared, then the farming machinery came into use, the first being the mower and the reaper, the latter costing as much as a good binder now. The reaper had four revolving rakes which drew the sheaves off the platform without binding. The first binder was on the Irish line on the homestead of the Shannahan farm, which cost about $350.

In the death of James Burnfield and his brother Andrew, Medonte has lost two of its pioneers. They have both seen an honourable old age, James being in his ninetieth year and Andrew in his eighty second year, Andrew having always remained single. In the summer of 1835 there came into Medonte their parents, James Burnfield, his wife, and two boys, one of them being the late James Burnfield at the age of three years. Mr. Burnfield settled himself and his family on the east half of lot 14, Con. 6, Medonte. Here he made a small clearing, living some time on it, but finding no water there, he moved to the west hundred acres. Mr. & Mrs. Burnfield, like all other pioneers had their hardships, and like other pioneers bore them with cheerfulness and contentment, always looking forward to better times. The time soon drew on when his family of boys was quite a help to him, James being the principal one in the help in clearing the bush, he being strong and robust young man, always able for his work, of which there was plenty to do.

When Mr. Burnfield had settled on his place sometimes he had a narrow escape from being killed with his gun. On seeing a coon outside he took down his gun to load it, the powder flask being a self-measuring one for a charge, a spring closing behind shut off the powder and in the emptying of the charge into the gun, the spring in some way failed too close, thus letting out more powder than the charge. When the gun was fired off it exploded, the barrel flying all to pieces, some parts being found a long distance from the shooting place. Mr. Burnfield received such a blow from the overloaded gun, it knocked him to the ground. This was the last time he handled a gun.

Mr. Burnfield was a retired British soldier, his tall erect form and military step showed well that he had been a soldier. He remained this way pretty well all his life. He had a very unpleasant experience of being lost in the woods, having gone towards evening to look for his cows in the dense woods which lay to the north. After walking in the woods for some time, he failed to find them, and finally came to realize that he was lost in the woods, and did not know which way to turn to find home. He then considered it was better for him to follow the banks of the river through to the road, which led out to the Penetang road, he would be safe when he landed there.

It was a long dreary walk in the night having to cross four concessions, and besides this, the great angle of the concessions and river added some miles extra. However he came out alright after his long tedious walk, his landing place being near where the grist mill now stands.

The wild animals such as bears and wolves then being plentiful, he was in great danger of his life. But when once on the road, he saw where his home lay. It was well toward morning when he reached home, there being great uneasiness and excitement over his loss in the woods, some of the neighbours had gathered blowing their horns and firing off their guns, but he heard nothing of it.

In the month of March, 1864, Mr. James Burnfield died, his wife having predeceased him two years, and on Apr. 5, 1865, their son, the late James Burnfield married Miss Jane Waller, who still survives him.

It was a beautiful day for being so early in the season. All was like sunshine. The settlers were busy ploughing, some with horses, others with oxen. It was just an ordinary country wedding, everything being well provided to make the occasion a happy one. When the writer sees the old vacant house from off the road where the wedding was held, it sets him a thinking of man's time on earth, for of those who attended the wedding very few remain. The minister has long passed away with the rest, which reminds us of what we read in the 103rd Psalm.

Of the Burnfield family, there still remains Robert, of Moonstone Mrs. R. Cumming, of Vesey, and Mrs. J. McGill of Waverley. Of the late James Burnfield's family remains Mrs. Wilson Miller and Miss Margaret of Oror, and William and Robert J. on the homestead.

In the early forties, there came from Scotland a man named John Robertson, to look for a home in the wilds of Medonte. He chose himself a lot, then the solid bush, now known as the "Robertson Farm". This man took the wiser plan of bringing two of his older sons with him, leaving the rest of the family behind, to have a home prepared for them when they should arrive. Some time in the latter part of August in the year 1845 the rest of the family arrived. When they came to the landing place, there stood betwixt them and the shanty a solid field of wheat ready for the sickle.

The older members of the family, with sickle in hand, went to work to reap a roadway to get in, for it must be understood that in those days, people with a small clearance could ill afford to lose a sheaf to be trampled under foot.

The mother of this family was a true type of a pioneer woman. Coming from the Old Country with a good strong constitution, she was able to bear the hardships of pioneer life. Not many years after her settling she lost her husband through death, which left her with more care, but being a very Godly Christian woman, and being careful and thrifty, she was ever able to make both ends meet to the wants of the family. The youngest of this family was a boy eleven years of age at the time of her settling on the place. Being small and delicate in his youth the older members of the family referred to him as the "wee laddie', but it was this "wee laddie" who grew up to be a pretty stout build of a man, Robert Robertson, and he has now lived six years over the fourscore, and is still well and strong.

A short time previous o his death, the writer had a long talk with the late Michael Hussey of his doings in Medonte, in his younger days, which would be too lengthy for your paper. He made mention of hiring himself with Mr. Peter Clelland, a store keeper along the Penetang Road, near Hillsdale. Here he was engaged as teamster. In the summer time the team was hitched to the heavy wagon, to take farm produce, which the store had taken in, to Toronto, and on returning he would bring back a load of store goods, the time covering five days. He made mention of settling on a bush lot just a short distance south of the post office at Mount St. Louis.

He spoke of the bush lot as being heavily timbered, there being a great deal of pine on it. As there was no sale for timber of any kind in the early clearing of the land, all had to be cut up into logs and burned off, and drawn into heaps with a yoke of oxen. He also made mention of being married in the year fifty-two, to the widow who is now left behind, so at the time of his death they had been married for over sixty years. Dying on August 5th., he lacked but a few days of completing his ninety-two years. The widow left behind is entitled to the sympathy of the surrounding neighbourhood in her bereavement.

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